



OFFICE OF
**RESEARCH
COMPLIANCE**
CENTRAL MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Title	Euthanasia Policy
Policy Number	IACUC-028
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Authorized by	IACUC

I. BACKGROUND

The Central Michigan University Animal Welfare Assurance to Public Health Service D16-00580 (“PHS Assurance”) states that Central Michigan University (CMU) will comply with the Public Health Service (PHS) Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals. PHS Policy requires compliance with The Animal Welfare Act and Animal Welfare Regulations (AWARs) as well as the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (“The Guide”).

The term euthanasia is derived from the Greek terms “eu” meaning “good” and “thanatos” meaning “death”. The term is usually used to describe ending the life of an individual animal in a way that minimizes or eliminates pain and distress. In the context of this policy, euthanasia is the act of inducing humane death in an animal with rapid unconsciousness and death with a minimum of pain, discomfort, or distress.

Public Health Policy requires the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) to determine that methods of euthanasia proposed in protocols meet criteria consistent with the recommendations of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA). The AVMA Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals (2020 Edition) set criteria for euthanasia and specify appropriate euthanasia methods and agents based upon the best literature and empirical evidence that minimizes pain and distress to animals during euthanasia.

II. POLICY

Animals being euthanized should not experience pain, fear, or other significant stress prior to their death.

Methods not covered in approved IACUC standard operating procedures (SOPs) need to be approved by the IACUC before utilization. The Principal Investigator should confer with the Attending Veterinarian prior to submitting the protocol to the IACUC.

All individuals responsible for euthanasia of research animals must be qualified and trained to perform euthanasia humanely, per the IACUC training policy. The Principal Investigator is responsible for ensuring that their personnel have been sufficiently trained, and for maintaining appropriate documentation. Documentation of personnel training may be reviewed by the IACUC.

Unintended recovery of animals after apparent death constitutes serious noncompliance with PHS Policy and serious deviation from the provisions of the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals. All CMU IACUC euthanasia SOPs incorporate secondary means of euthanasia to ensure

that death has occurred. Other methods submitted for IACUC review should include secondary methods.

III. PROCEDURES

- A. Whenever possible, investigators will perform euthanasia following approved IACUC SOPs. These SOPs were developed to:
 - 1. Assist the research community by clarifying the specific procedures relating to euthanasia.
 - 2. Promote best practices and ensure that pain and distress are minimized during euthanasia.
- B. In the absence of an approved IACUC SOP appropriate for the proposed research, the euthanasia procedures must be detailed in an approved IACUC protocol. These procedures must describe:
 - 1. Methods that result in rapid unconsciousness followed by cardiac or respiratory arrest and ultimately loss of brain function.
 - 2. Means for minimizing stress and anxiety experienced by the animal prior to unconsciousness. Stress can be further minimized by technical proficiency and humane handling of the animals to be euthanized.
 - 3. Secondary methods to ensure death.

IV. REFERENCES

American Veterinary Medical Association, Panel on Euthanasia. (2020). *AVMA guidelines for the euthanasia of animals: 2020 edition*. American Veterinary Medical Association.

<https://www.avma.org/sites/default/files/2020-01/2020-Euthanasia-Final-1-17-20.pdf>

National Institutes of Health, Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare. (2015). *PHS policy on humane care and use of laboratory animals*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

<https://olaw.nih.gov/policies-laws/phs-policy.htm>

National Research Council of the National Academies, Division on Earth and Life Studies, Institute for Laboratory Animal Research, Committee for the Update of the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals. (2011).

Guide for the care and use of laboratory animals (8th ed.). The National Academies Press.

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